

**Third Taxing District of Norwalk, Conn.
June 8, 2005
Special Meeting with the East Norwalk Historical Cemetery Association
Meeting Minutes**

ATTENDANCE: Paul Coggin, Commissioner

STAFF: George Leary, General Manager and Larry Dennin, Jr., District Counsel

OTHERS: Members of the East Norwalk Historical Cemetery Association: Chris Burr, President, Michael Lyons, Terry Rooney, Earl Carpenter *who else? Why don't you write Chris Burr and get the names.*

Mr. Coggin opened the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Lacking a quorum no official Commission business was conducted or votes taken however these notes provide a record of the meeting.

Organization/Make-Up/Charter of the East Norwalk Historical Cemetery Association, Inc., (ENHCA) – is it ENCA or ENHCA?

Copies of Chris Burr's email of 2/10/05 summarizing the annual meeting of the ENHCA were distributed. Mr. Lyons stated that he was able to confirm that the Association is recorded with the State as a general non-profit organization. Although it was acknowledged that the District holds title to the property and has been maintaining the property, Mr. Lyons noted that to his knowledge nobody has been designated the proper burial authority. His thoughts are that the District Commission should designate the ENHCA as the burial authority to handle the details of burials. He also stated that a copy of the manual on burial would be sent in Word format. Mr. Burr stated that he would provide a list of names and addresses of ENHCA directors all but three of whom were present.

A book showing the location and wording on each headstone was presented. A scanned copy of this book will be provided.

Financial Condition of the ENHCA Including Balances and Funds, and Sources and Uses of Funds

Mr. Carpenter reported that the ENHCA has approximately \$600 in a checking account and \$139,000 in trust. The trust is invested in part in stocks. Mr. Lyons stated that the trust is restricted such that only interest (not the original donated principal) is available to the ENHCA for spending, but that under Chapter 45A-520 it may be possible to have this restriction removed. . Mr. Coggin asked how much of the trust was considered principal versus interest. The Association could provide only a rough estimate of approximately \$50,000 in principal but wasn't really sure. The Association agreed it would look into the trust and see how much is considered principal from the restricted donation/bequest, and how much has accumulated due to interest and other income. It was acknowledged

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that any funds from the interest/earnings could potentially be used if so desired, without having to go through the process of removing any restrictions.

There was a discussion of the ENHCA submitting a budget to the TTD in December or early January for funding decision by the Electors in March. It was agreed that the ENHCA should submit the budgetary request by December. It was also discussed and agreed that any funding provided would presumably include a process in which TTD handled the funds and paid the bills.

It was noted that the District Budget for 05-06 contains \$20,000 for the cemetery that includes normal maintenance and funds for headstone repairs (approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000 for grass cutting and related land maintenance, and another approximately \$8,000 for stonework).

Plans for Repairs/Improvements

Following discussion, improvements/repairs that were identified include the following:

- Repair headstones
- Fill depressions in earth
- Install signs – guided tour
- Remove dead trees
- Plant dogwoods to replace dogwoods that died – feed existing dogwoods
- Remove trash trees especially tree tipping gate pillar at end of Van Zant St.
- Welding repairs to gates
- Repair plot border fences
- Install period lights on main gate
- Repairs and painting of all metal gates (Chris Burr in progress on this and doing a nice job)

Relative Roles And Responsibilities Of TTD And ENCA Including Funding, Maintaining And Managing The Cemetery

Discussion was had on the designation of the Burial Ground Authority as outlined in the statutes. Under the law the Commission could designate either the TTD or the ENHCA. It was the consensus that, since ENHCA has been acting as the Burial Ground Authority that they should be so designated by the Commission.

Next Steps

It was discussed and agreed that any activities taken by either body should be done with the other's knowledge and coordination as needed. Communications both ways was seen as key. It was also generally discussed that both bodies should participate in funding maintenance and improvements.

There was discussion of possible historic registration but, since substantial legal protections already exist, this was considered unnecessary and possibly restrictive.

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There was also discussion of contacting families to repair the broken fences around several plots. Chris Burr to look into it.

It was agreed that one of the top priorities is to repair a number of badly damaged headstones. ENHCA agreed that they would spearhead this effort by getting quotes for work, coordinating and communication with the Commission as needed. Since both parties would participate in funding this work (given the large expected cost), a follow-up budget meeting would be needed once cost estimates are in.

It was also agreed that TTD would pursue specific improvements subject to the budget approved by the Electors and any co-funding the ENHCA can provide. These District-led improvements are primarily landscaping related and include the following:

- Fill depressions
- Remove one or two dead trees in the interior of the cemetery
- Remove two live trees at the perimeter stone walls, where the wall is being pushed over (adhere to City Tree removal process as needed).
- Plant dogwoods to replace dogwoods that died
- Feed existing dogwoods

Finally, and of lower priority than the above, install period lights on main gate

The District will continue with routine maintenance as it is currently doing (e.g., grass cutting contract).

The District Commission will act upon designating the ENHCA as the burial authority at an upcoming Commission meeting.

Summary of materials/items to be provided by ENHCA:

- List of ENHCA board members names, address (from Chris Burr)
- Current ENHCA burial manual and charter (Mike Lyons)
- ENHCA booklet of stones and plot plan from ~1970 (Mike Lyons)
- A better estimate of the portion of the trust fund that is available for immediate use (Chris Burr) since the District budget has only a fraction of the monies needed for the maintenance/improvement items above.
- An estimate of the reasonable yearly co-funding that the ENHCA can provide to support the maintenance and improvement of the cemetery. This will be overall forward planning for the Association and the District.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

George E Leary
Secretary Pro Tem